



Communications Policy Coach

Overview

This policy document outlines the acceptable use of communication and social networking between coaches and under-18 club members.

Acceptable Conduct

Coaches of age 18 or above must not:

- Communicate directly with an individual member aged under 18 on a one-to-one basis via text message, social networking, email or any other electronic means. This includes written, photographic and video forms of communication.
- Use social networking to post unfavourable, abusive or disrespectful comments/content regarding members, coaches, club personnel, or the club itself.
- 'Friend' or link in any other way with the social networking profile of an individual member aged under 18.

One-to-one communication is permitted in the following exceptional circumstances:

- In emergency situations.
- Via telephone if the call is witnessed/recorded wherever possible.
- To 16 and 17 year olds with parental consent and copies of all correspondence sent to the welfare officer/senior club official.

Best Practice

Should coaches need to contact under-18 club members:

- Communications should be via the members' parent(s)/carer(s) and the content should not be of a personal nature.
- Where necessary, only contact members en mass with contact information hidden from recipients (e.g. using BCC).
- Make communications impersonal, professional and, where possible, final - without inviting response.

All coaches and officials within the club must enforce the following:

- Participants must not use mobile phones or other communication devices in sessions.
- Posts by the club on social networks must not be of a personal nature or one-to-one.
- Coaches and officials should 'post' as the club and not as an individual where possible.
- Inform the appropriate welfare officer(s) of any breaches of this policy by any adult coaches.
- Encourage responsible use of social networking and communications within the club by all members.

More Information

Can be found on page 16 of the British Gymnastics Safeguarding and Protecting Children Policy or from your welfare officer(s).